

**MIDDLE ATLANTIC
Region 1
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Librarians Without Walls – Applying Mobile Technology
to Virtual Library Services
Vassar Brothers Medical Center
Medical Library
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Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Approaches and Interventions Used.....	4
Evaluation Activities.....	5
Problems or Barriers Encountered.....	6
Continuation Plans.....	7
Impact.....	8
Lessons Learned.....	9
Other.....	10
Attachment 1 – AR summary data: Subcontractor activities.....	11

Executive Summary

This project had two primary goals - to improve medical center staff and physician awareness of e-resources, and to demonstrate access to and usability of those resources in various patient care settings. Target populations included nurses, medical specialists, patient care professionals and clinical support staff, with a special focus on under served staff in areas such as outpatient clinics, oncology care and specialty surgery. During the course of the project period, many contacts were made with staff in those under-served areas as well as with the various multidisciplinary teams. Staff feedback was very positive, with an "excellent" rating of 91.7%. As a result of over 75 encounters and demonstrations, hits on the e-resources have gone up significantly. With the ability to do point-of-need research using the iPads, there has been a noticeable increase in interest in web-based resources and in the services of the library.

Minority Populations Served

African Americans: No
American Indians/Alaska Natives: No
Asian Americans: No
Hispanics/Latinos: No
Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders: No
Other: No

Approaches and Interventions Used

Goals: 1. Improve awareness of e-resources available on the library's web Gateway, including PubMed with LinkOut feature for connecting to full text articles; 2. Offer iPad-based training on how to access e-resources to a broad audience of staff, with a particular focus on under-served areas.

Steps:

1. Set up of iPads to connect with the medical center's wireless system. -No issues encountered

2. Test connectivity and ability to do demonstrations in various locations. -No issues encountered

3. Assess users' familiarity with and opinion of e-resources available. Over 60 encounters and an "Excellent" rating of 91.7%

4. Attended 18 multidisciplinary committee meetings and conducted many on-the-spot searches or article look-ups.

Library manager and library coordinator worked together to attend meetings and conduct demonstrations with as many staff as possible. An Open House was held during National Library Week which was very well-attended and resulted in many additional opportunities to showcase resources and services. Portability and ease of use of the iPads proved their worth in that highly open situation.

Evaluation Activities

SurveyMonkey was used to assess users' feedback of the web Gateway resources -A total of 37 people took the questionnaire. One-on-one encounters were employed as much as possible - A total of 40 encounters tracked. Of those encounters, most involved showing PubMed with LinkOut and other resources for accessing full text articles. Open House was used as a platform for demonstrations to staff - over 100 people attended the five-day event.

Ability to attend multidisciplinary meetings, shared between the manager and the coordinator, resulted in a librarian in attendance at 100% of the meetings in the past three months. Goal to reach under-served areas was only partially met - specialty surgery outreach was successful, but visits to outpatient clinics could not be arranged due to staffing issues and scheduling. Also we discovered the wireless system on which we relied was not as reliable in outlying locations. However, several clinic and specialty area staff came to the Open House and received one-on-one demonstrations.

Problems or Barriers Encountered

Only problem encountered was staff turn-over at two of the clinics and so site visits to do demonstrations could not be arranged. There were no IT issues.

Continuation Plans

Library manager and library coordinator will continue to take their iPads to multidisciplinary meetings for research support. Because of the ability to provide point-of-need information while at the table, there has been an amazing increase in awareness of and usage of library services, particularly in the area of patient care decision-making. As a result of one encounter, library coordinator has been asked to serve on a cardiology sub-committee. Portability and instant Web access will continue to allow for real-time demonstrations to staff at every level. Plans also include reaching out to several outpatient and clinic areas to expand awareness and increase e-resource usage.

Impact

Our medical library's mission is to connect medical center staff with top-quality resources and services for patient care. The use of technology such as iPads allows a small staff of two to reach so many more people as well as to provide efficient services in real-time. We had numerous staff say to us that they never knew they had access to so much information. During one demo, a cardiologist said the Gateway was the best web site he uses on a daily basis. when I explained about LinkOut, he was even more impressed.

Lessons Learned

Library manager and library coordinator were surprised by the attention received when we pulled out the iPads at meetings, and amazed at how many more encounters and demonstrations that could accomplish because of the interest in the iPads themselves. Because of the iPad technology, one-on-one demonstrations were very easy and encounters could happen at any time and in any place - perfect for a busy medical center setting.

Open House was very successful as a way to increase encounters, but an entire week was a bit long for a small library with only two staff members (difficult to keep up with services while maintaining an open house atmosphere).

Other

Additional information available upon request:

Surveymonkey results (pdf)

Final invoice with check payment confirmation(pdf)

Attachment 1: AR summary data: Subcontractor activities